

# Writing Grade 4

Writing is a skill that is not only important but is also fun. It is a way to share our ideas with others. We will use this skill all of our lives. It takes practice and hard work to become a good writer. We need to look at our own writing as a reader does and be sure that our writing says what we want it to say. On the next page is a list of writing skills that you should know and be able to do by the end of your fourth grade year. Talk with your teacher and your parents to be sure you understand what they mean. And practice your writing – notes, lists, directions, invitations, letters, reports, and stories. That’s the best way to become a better writer!

## About the Test

You will be expected to write one extended writing piece on a specific topic. This writing test will be completed in two sessions with a significant break between them. In session one, you will do prewriting, planning, and drafting. This work will not be scored. In session two, you will revise your draft with the Writer’s Checklist and write your final draft. Only the final draft will be scored. There is an example of a writing prompt and scored student responses on pages 15 through 26 of this guide. A copy of the Official Scoring Guide is also included at the end of this guide.

## Hints for Taking AIMS DPA Writing

- When asked to write, be sure to think, write, and then read your work!
- For the extended writing prompt, be sure to use the steps in the writing process. Take the time to plan, draft, revise, and edit.
- Use the writer’s checklist – it will help you make improvements in your draft.
- Recopy your rough draft carefully into the answer document (only your final copy will be scored, not your rough draft).• Read your final copy to be sure it says what you mean.
- Use your best handwriting.
- Take your time.

## How to Use the Writing Samples in This Section

At the bottom of this page is an example of an extended (longer) writing prompt like the one you will be given on AIMS DPA Writing. On the next few pages are sample papers that fourth grade students wrote in response to this writing prompt and the scores they were given. Follow the steps below to help you use these samples.

1. Be sure you **understand the task**: what is the prompt asking you to write?
2. **Read the papers** these fourth graders wrote.
3. **Think about the writing**. Are the writer's ideas clear? Is the paper organized with a beginning, middle, and end? Can you hear the writer's voice? Did the writer choose words carefully? Do the sentences make sense? Did the writer edit the paper carefully for mistakes?
4. **Talk about these papers** with your teacher and other students. What did you see in these papers that helped you understand the writer's message? Where does the paper need work?
5. **Read the scores** with your teacher or a parent to see if you understand and agree with the comments made about each score. Use the Official Scoring Guide to help you understand the comments and scores.
6. **Write your own** paper for practice.
7. **Ask your teacher** to score your paper (or score it yourself!) and pay attention to what you did well and what you can do to make your paper better.

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The following four examples illustrate the scoring performed for AIMS DPA.

The first example is scored as "**Falls Far Below.**"

The second example is scored as "**Approaches.**"

The third example is scored as "**Meets.**"

The fourth example is scored as "**Exceeds.**"

**Sample writing prompt:**

We all have things that we believe are exciting. Think of something you have done that was exciting to you. It might be winning a ball game, getting a new pet, or riding a bike.

Write a story about a time when you felt excited.

This is the Writer's Checklist you will see on the Grade 4 AIMS DPA Writing. Practice using it when writing to revise your rough draft before writing your final copy. If you take time to use it carefully, it will help you write a better paper.

**Writer's Checklist**

Are my ideas clear?

Does my writing have words that make it interesting?

Does my writing have a clear beginning, middle, and ending?

Does my writing sound right and make sense?

Did I edit for capital letters?

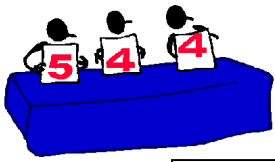
Did I edit for correct punctuation?

Did I edit for correct spelling?

### Writing

**FINAL COPY**

When I felt excited was ...  
when I felt excited was when I  
got Buddy and Fluffy my dogs.



## Score Sheet for Writing Sample 1

### **Prompt:**

We have all done things we believe are exciting. Think of something that was exciting to you. It might be a ball game, getting a new pet, or riding a bike.

Write a story about a time when you felt excited.

### **Paper Falls Far Below the standard**

#### *Ideas & Content*

6 5 4 3 2 (1)

#### *Organization*

6 5 4 3 2 (1)

#### *Voice*

6 5 4 3 2 (1)

#### *Word Choice*

6 5 4 3 2 (1)

#### *Sentence Fluency*

6 5 4 3 2 (1)

#### *Conventions*

6 5 4 3 (2) 1

The underlined passages are taken from the *Official Scoring Guide for AIMS Writing* (Six Trait Rubric). Papers are original samples of Arizona student writing. Identifying information has been removed.

**Ideas and Content:** Ideas are extremely limited. Attempts at development are minimal. The paper is too short to demonstrate the development of an idea. **Score point is 1.**

**Organization:** The writer has failed to provide an effective beginning, body, and ending. There is not enough content to discern an organizational attempt. **Score point is 1.**

**Voice:** The writing lacks a sense of commitment. There is a lack of audience awareness and no sense of interaction between the writer and the reader. **Score point is 1.**

**Word Choice:** The writing shows an extremely limited vocabulary. Only the most general kind of message is communicated. **Score point is 1.**

**Sentence Fluency:** The text consists of one sentence. A writer does not demonstrate fluency with one sentence. **Score point is 1.**

**Conventions:** The writer shows little control over standard writing conventions. In the short offering, spelling is correct, but there are only 10 words. End-of-sentence punctuation is shown one time only. Internal punctuation is missing. **Score point is 2.**

## Sample 2A

**Writing**

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My family and I went to San Diego, California for some fun. We had to wake up at 4:00 in the morning. We went into Albertsons to get breakfast. After that, we started on our 6 hour journey to San . It was so boring in the car!

When we went outside it was chilly, so we ran inside the hotel and check in. We were tired from our long trip so we all took a nap.

The next day, my dad drove us to SeaWorld for some family fun. A and I were so excited! The first show we saw was when a bunch of people in costumes, doing fancy moves. Then we went to the gray dolphins and pet them. Some people had fish to feed the gray dolphins and pet them while eating. There was a cool ride called River Rapids. My dad went on with me. it was so fun when we tried to dodge the waterfalls that were on your side. Then after 1 more time with my dad I went with my mom. My mom bought me a warm sweat shirt because I was so cold with the wet water. I have been waiting to touch the sting ray for a long time so we went to the water

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Go On 

## Sample 2B

**Writing**

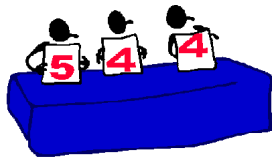
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of the ting rays and trie to touch them  
but did not succeed.

We went back to the hotel and get  
into our warm, cunnmy beds.





## Score Sheet for Writing Sample 2

### **Prompt:**

We have all done things we believe are exciting. Think of something that was exciting to you. It might be a ball game, getting a new pet, or riding a bike.

Write a story about a time when you felt excited.

### **Paper Approaches the standard**

#### *Ideas & Content*

6 5 4 3 2 1

#### *Organization*

6 5 4 3 2 1

#### *Voice*

6 5 4 3 2 1

#### *Word Choice*

6 5 4 3 2 1

#### *Sentence Fluency*

6 5 4 3 2 1

#### *Conventions*

6 5 4 3 2 1

The underlined passages are taken from the *Official Scoring Guide for AIMS Writing* (Six Trait Rubric). Papers are original samples of Arizona student writing. Identifying information has been removed.

**Ideas and Content:** The reader can understand the main idea, but developmental details are often limited and uneven and somewhat off-topic. The writer includes breakfast at Albertsons, taking a nap, and a warm sweatshirt, none of which support the idea of excitement. **Score point is 3.**

**Organization:** An attempt has been made to organize the writing; however, the overall structure is inconsistent or skeletal. The writing has a beginning and an ending which are underdeveloped. Placement of details is not always effective. Transitions are limited to “when” and “then,” and the ending must be inferred because the writer went to bed. **Score point is 3.**

**Voice:** A voice is present. In places the writing is expressive. The reader may glimpse the writer behind the words, but it happens only briefly in sporadic fashion. When the writer describes the “River Rapids” and “touching the sting ray,” the voice comes through. **Score point is 4.**

**Word Choice:** Words effectively convey the intended message. However, the writer uses expression that is functional. There are rare experiments with language, such as “dodge,” “succeed,” and “cumffy,” but generally the writer merely uses words that work. **Score point is 4.**

**Sentence Fluency:** Sentence patterns are somewhat varied, but connections between phrases or sentences are less than fluid. The writer shows strong control over simple sentence structures, but variable control over more complex sentences. There are also repeated patterns of sentences, such as subject-verb, “when we” and “then I.” **Score point is 4.**

**Conventions:** The writer demonstrates limited control of standard writing conventions. Errors begin to impede readability. There are spelling errors that distract the reader, misspelling of common words occurs. Words such as “exited,” “wating,” and “worm” add to a significant need for editing. **Score point is 3.**



### Sample 3A

#### Writing

##### My Basketball game

One morning I wake up and I notice I had a basketball game in R P.

Then me my mom and my brothers drove up to R P. When we got there we went to the store and my mom bought us some drinks for the game.

Finally we were at the game, and we waited for the game to start.

When our coach came to our game it started, so we went on the court so we can warm up.

Then our game started, I was in the starting five. L jumped ball for our team because he was the tallest on our side.

In the middle of our game we only had one point and they had thirty seven points.

At the end of our game we had one point and they beat us by forty one points.

Then we went on the losers bracket. So we had to play L and we beat them so we had to play W R, and we beat them.

So we played K again for championship. We played for championship because



## Sample 3B

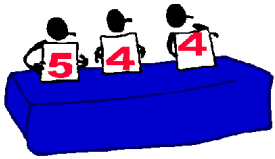
**Writing**

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we beat the other two teams. Then we played for championship we made more points then the last game. The score the first time was one to forty two, and the second time was thirteen to twenty three.

After the game they did the awards. Last place was to L, third place was to W & R, and second place was to our team. We got seatshirts, and first place was to K, and they got a sweater.

After they did the awards we went home. When we got home it was about 10:30 a.m. When we got home we went to bed.



### Score Sheet for Writing Sample 3

#### **Prompt:**

We have all done things we believe are exciting. Think of something that was exciting to you. It might be a ball game, getting a new pet, or riding a bike.

Write a story about a time when you felt excited.

#### **Paper Meets the standard**

##### *Ideas & Content*

6 5 4 3 2 1

##### *Organization*

6 5 4 3 2 1

##### *Voice*

6 5 4 3 2 1

##### *Word Choice*

6 5 4 3 2 1

##### *Sentence Fluency*

6 5 4 3 2 1

##### *Conventions*

6 5 4 3 2 1

The underlined passages are taken from the *Official Scoring Guide for AIMS Writing* (Six Trait Rubric). Papers are original samples of Arizona student writing. Identifying information has been removed.

**Ideas and Content:** The writing is clear and focused. Support is present, although it may be limited or rather general. Developmental details may occasionally be out of balance (“...my mom bought us some drinks.” and “In the middle of our game we only had one point and they had thirty seven points.”) **Score point is 4.**

**Organization:** Order and structure are present but may seem formulaic. The writing has a beginning that may not be particularly inviting and a conclusion that lacks subtlety. **Score point is 4.**

**Voice:** A voice is present. There is a sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader but has not consistently employed an appropriate voice. The writer tends to “report” rather than build excitement about the tournament. There is no mention of team or school celebration; the second place just happened. **Score point is 4.**

**Word Choice:** The writer employs a variety of words that are functional and appropriate to audience and purpose. However, they are words that work but do not particularly energize the writing. More action verbs could be used in place of the repetitive “played” and “went.” **Score point is 4.**

**Sentence Fluency:** The writing flows; however, connections between phrases or sentences may be less than fluid. The writer shows strong control over simple sentence structures. Some repeated patterns of sentence structure, length, and beginnings detract from the overall impact. For instance, four sentences begin with “then;” four begin with “when.” Also, the writer tends to overuse the connector “so” in many sentences. **Score point is 4.**

**Conventions:** Minor errors, while perhaps noticeable, do not impede readability. The writer uses correct end punctuation, but internal punctuation may sometimes be incorrect. There is only a moderate need for editing. **Score point is 4.**

## Sample 4A

Writing

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I was so excited! Today my sister, \_\_\_\_\_, and my brother, \_\_\_\_\_, and I were accompanying my mom for a hike up the McDowell Mountains. Mom had finally agreed that we were ready for such a rugged trail. All of us were equipped; and ready to roll. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and I piled in the back of Mom's Mini Van. Before we could like travel anywhere, we had to make sure that we had loaded everything from our cold pack of sandwiches to Mom's fanny pack with her cell phone. Then we were off! It was the longest ten minute drive of my life! \_\_\_\_\_ eagerly hopped out at the base of the mountain. The rest of us followed her. Then we began our way up. We paused from time to time to take a drink of water.

Mom, \_\_\_\_\_, and I hoisted ourselves up a rocky ledge and waited for Mom. She tossed our backpack up to me, and \_\_\_\_\_ pulled out the cold bag. Then she scouted out a good place to spread our meal. Mom's face appeared over the edge, and she pushed herself up. Mom reached down to tighten her fanny pack. Her fanny pack was missing! She peered back down the mountain side, and there was her pack. She turned to us. "You may start eating lunch," she said. "I'll

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## Sample 4B

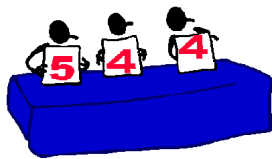
### Writing

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be right back." Then she carefully slid down the side of the mountain.

She was on her way back up again when the boulder underneath her started to tremble. I crashed to the ground far below. Mom wailed in fear as she tumbled downward. Mom jumped up and prepared to rescue her. I held him back. I crept forward to look at Mom. She lie there, motionless. I passed around a thermos of lemonade, but none of us was thirsty, not even

Suddenly we heard the rumble of a helicopter up above. Two paramedics lifted us on to roll away cots in the helicopter. A smiling nurse perched on the end of my bed. "Where's my mom?" I asked her. She shushed me. "Your mom will just fine," she answered. "Now you better get some rest." Reasured, I drifted off to sleep. Finally I could let down my guard and let someone else take control.



## Score Sheet for Writing Sample 4

### Prompt:

We have all done things we believe are exciting. Think of something that was exciting to you. It might be a ball game, getting a new pet, or riding a bike.

Write a story about a time when you felt excited.

### Paper Exceeds the standard

<i>Ideas &amp; Content</i> 6 <u>5</u> 4 3 2 1	<i>Organization</i> 6 <u>5</u> 4 3 2 1	<i>Voice</i> <u>6</u> 5 4 3 2 1
<i>Word Choice</i> <u>6</u> 5 4 3 2 1	<i>Sentence Fluency</i> <u>6</u> 5 4 3 2 1	<i>Conventions</i> <u>6</u> 5 4 3 2 1

The underlined passages are taken from the *Official Scoring Guide for AIMS Writing* (Six Trait Rubric). Papers are original samples of Arizona student writing. Identifying information has been removed.

**Ideas and Content:** The writing is clear, focused, and interesting. The writer offers supporting, relevant, carefully selected details such as packing the cell phone, pausing for water, and the “trembling” boulder. **Score point is 5.**

**Organization:** The organization enhances the central ideas. The writer employs smooth, effective transitions among all elements. The paper begins with excitement and ends with resolution. **Score point is 5.**

**Voice:** The writer seems deeply committed to the topic, and there is an exceptional sense of “writing to be read.” The reader enjoys the liveliness, conviction, excitement, and humor. The writer employs an effective level of closeness to the audience in the narrative. The phrase “equipped and ready to roll” is especially effective. **Score point is 6.**

**Word Choice:** Words convey the intended message in an exceptionally interesting, precise, and natural way. The writer employs a rich, broad range of words which have been carefully chosen. Action verbs such as “piled,” “hopped,” “paused,” “boosted,” “scouted,” “peered,” “slid,” “crashed,” and “shushed” add liveliness. The use of “boulder” versus rock, and “rugged” instead of hard or difficult are indicative of the writer’s strong vocabulary use. **Score point is 6.**

**Sentence Fluency:** Sentences show a high degree of craftsmanship with consistently strong and varied structure. The writer has stylistic control, and dialogue sounds natural. Both short and longer sentences are used effectively. **Score point is 6.**

**Conventions:** The writer demonstrates exceptionally strong control of standard writing conventions. The paragraph breaks reinforce the organizational structure. There is little or no need for editing. **Score point is 6.**

# AIMS Six Trait Analytic Writing Rubric – Official Scoring Guide

## IDEAS and CONTENT

<p><b>6</b></p> <p>The writing is exceptionally clear, focused and interesting. It holds the reader’s attention throughout. Main ideas stand out and are developed by strong support and rich details suitable to audience and purpose. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clarity, focus, and control.</li> <li>• main idea(s) that stand out.</li> <li>• supporting, relevant, carefully selected details; when appropriate, use of resources provides strong, accurate, credible support</li> <li>• a thorough, balanced, in-depth explanation/ exploration of the topic; the writing makes connections and shares insights.</li> <li>• content and selected details that are well suited to audience and purpose.</li> </ul>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>The writing is clear, focused and interesting. It holds the reader’s attention. Main ideas stand out and are developed by supporting details suitable to audience and purpose. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clarity, focus, and control.</li> <li>• main idea(s) that stand out.</li> <li>• supporting, relevant, carefully selected details; when appropriate, use of resources provides strong, accurate, credible support.</li> <li>• a thorough, balanced explanation/exploration of the topic; the writing makes connections and shares insights.</li> <li>• content and selected details that are well-suited to audience and purpose.</li> </ul>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>The writing is clear and focused. The reader can easily understand the main ideas. Support is present, although it may be limited or rather general. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an easily identifiable purpose.</li> <li>• clear main idea(s)</li> <li>• supporting details that are relevant, but may be overly general or limited in places; when appropriate, resources are used to provide accurate support.</li> <li>• a topic that is explored/explained, although developmental details may occasionally be out of balance with the main idea(s); some connections and insights may be present.</li> <li>• content and selected details that are relevant, but perhaps not consistently well chosen for audience and purpose.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>The reader can understand the main ideas, although they may be overly broad or simplistic, and the results may not be effective. Supporting detail is often limited, insubstantial, overly general, or occasionally slightly off-topic. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an easily identifiable purpose and main idea(s).</li> <li>• predictable or overly-obvious main ideas or plot; conclusions or main points seem to echo observations heard elsewhere.</li> <li>• support that is attempted; but developmental details that are often limited in scope, uneven, somewhat off-topic, predictable, or overly general.</li> <li>• details that may not be well-grounded in credible resources; they may be based on clichés, stereotypes or questionable sources of information.</li> <li>• difficulties when moving from general observations to specifics.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Main ideas and purpose are somewhat unclear or development is attempted but minimal. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a purpose and main idea(s) that may require extensive inferences by the reader.</li> <li>• minimal development; insufficient details.</li> <li>• irrelevant details that clutter the text.</li> <li>• extensive repetition of detail.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>The writing lacks a central idea or purpose. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ideas that are extremely limited or simply unclear.</li> <li>• attempts at development that are minimal or non-existent; the paper is too short to demonstrate the development of an idea.</li> </ul>

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# AIMS Six Trait Analytic Writing Rubric – Official Scoring Guide

## ORGANIZATION

<p><b>6</b></p> <p>The organization enhances the central idea(s) and its development. The order and structure are compelling and move the reader through the text easily. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effective, perhaps creative, sequencing; the organizational structure fits the topic, and the writing is easy to follow.</li> <li>• a strong, inviting beginning that draws the reader in and a strong satisfying sense of resolution or closure.</li> <li>• smooth, effective transitions among all elements (sentences, paragraphs, and ideas).</li> <li>• details that fit where placed.</li> </ul>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>The organization enhances the central idea(s) and its development. The order and structure are strong and move the reader through the text. The writing is characterized by.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effective sequencing; the organizational structure fits the topic, and the writing is easy to follow.</li> <li>• an inviting beginning that draws the reader in and a satisfying sense of resolution or closure.</li> <li>• smooth, effective transitions among all elements (sentences, paragraphs, and ideas).</li> <li>• details that fit where placed.</li> </ul>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>Organization is clear and coherent. Order and structure are present, but may seem formulaic. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear sequencing.</li> <li>• an organization that may be predictable.</li> <li>• a recognizable, developed beginning that may not be particularly inviting; a developed conclusion that may lack subtlety.</li> <li>• a body that is easy to follow with details that fit where placed.</li> <li>• transitions that may be stilted or formulaic.</li> <li>• organization which helps the reader, despite some weaknesses.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>An attempt has been made to organize the writing; however, the overall structure is inconsistent or skeletal. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attempts at sequencing, but the order or the relationship among ideas may occasionally be unclear.</li> <li>• a beginning and an ending which, although present, are either undeveloped or too obvious (e.g. “My topic is...”, “These are all the reasons that...”)</li> <li>• transitions that sometimes work. The same few transitional devices (e.g., coordinating conjunctions, numbering, etc.) may be overused.</li> <li>• a structure that is skeletal or too rigid.</li> <li>• placement of details that may not always be effective.</li> <li>• organization which lapses in some places, but helps the reader in others.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>The writing lacks a clear organizational structure. An occasional organizational device is discernible; however, the writing is either difficult to follow and the reader has to reread substantial portions, or the piece is simply too short to demonstrate organizational skills. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some attempts at sequencing, but the order or the relationship among ideas is frequently unclear.</li> <li>• a missing or extremely undeveloped beginning, body, and/or ending.</li> <li>• a lack of transitions, or when present, ineffective or overused.</li> <li>• a lack of an effective organizational structure.</li> <li>• details that seem to be randomly placed, leaving the reader frequently confused.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>The writing lacks coherence; organization seems haphazard and disjointed. Even after rereading, the reader remains confused. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a lack of effective sequencing.</li> <li>• a failure to provide an identifiable beginning, body and/or ending.</li> <li>• a lack of transitions.</li> <li>• pacing that is consistently awkward; the reader feels either mired down in trivia or rushed along too rapidly.</li> <li>• a lack of organization which ultimately obscures or distorts the main point.</li> </ul>

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# AIMS Six Trait Analytic Writing Rubric – Official Scoring Guide

## VOICE

<p><b>6</b></p> <p>The writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose and audience. The writer seems deeply committed to the topic, and there is an exceptional sense of “writing to be read.” The writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an effective level of closeness to or distance from the audience (e.g., a narrative should have a strong personal voice, while an expository piece may require extensive use of outside resources and a more academic voice; nevertheless, both should be engaging, lively, or interesting. Technical writing may require greater distance.).</li> <li>• an exceptionally strong sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader and of how to communicate the message most effectively. The reader may discern the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction.</li> <li>• a sense that the topic has come to life; when appropriate, the writing may show originality, liveliness, honesty, conviction, excitement, humor, or suspense.</li> </ul>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>The writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. The writer seems committed to the topic, and there is a sense of “writing to be read.” The writing is expressive, engaging or sincere. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an appropriate level of closeness to or distance from the audience (e.g., a narrative should have a strong personal voice while an expository piece may require extensive use of outside resources and a more academic voice; nevertheless, both should be engaging, lively or interesting. Technical writing may require greater distance.).</li> <li>• a strong sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader and of how to communicate the message most effectively. The reader may discern the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction.</li> <li>• a sense that the topic has come to life; when appropriate, the writing may show originality, liveliness, honesty, conviction, excitement, humor, or suspense.</li> </ul>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>A voice is present. The writer demonstrates commitment to the topic, and there may be a sense of “writing to be read.” In places, the writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a questionable or inconsistent level of closeness to or distance from the audience.</li> <li>• a sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader but has not consistently employed an appropriate voice. The reader may glimpse the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction in places.</li> <li>• liveliness, sincerity, or humor when appropriate; however, at times the writing may be either inappropriately casual or personal, or inappropriately formal and stiff.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>The writer’s commitment to the topic seems inconsistent. A sense of the writer may emerge at times; however, the voice is either inappropriately personal or inappropriately impersonal. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a limited sense of audience; the writer’s awareness of the reader is unclear.</li> <li>• an occasional sense of the writer behind the words; however, the voice may shift or disappear a line or two later and the writing become somewhat mechanical.</li> <li>• a limited ability to shift to a more objective voice when necessary.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>The writing provides little sense of involvement or commitment. There is no evidence that the writer has chosen a suitable voice. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• little engagement of the writer; the writing tends to be largely flat, lifeless, stiff, or mechanical.</li> <li>• a voice that is likely to be overly informal and personal.</li> <li>• a lack of audience awareness; there is little sense of “writing to be read.”</li> <li>• little or no hint of the writer behind the words. There is rarely a sense of interaction between reader and writer.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>The writing seems to lack a sense of involvement or commitment. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no engagement of the writer; the writing is flat and lifeless.</li> <li>• a lack of audience awareness; there is no sense of “writing to be read.”</li> <li>• no hint of the writer behind the words. There is no sense of interaction between writer and reader; the writing does not involve or engage the reader.</li> </ul>

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# AIMS Six Trait Analytic Writing Rubric – Official Scoring Guide

## WORD CHOICE

<p><b>6</b></p> <p>Words convey the intended message in an exceptionally interesting, precise, and natural way appropriate to audience and purpose. The writer employs a rich, broad range of words, which have been carefully chosen and thoughtfully placed for impact. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accurate, strong, specific words; powerful words energize the writing.</li> <li>• fresh, original expression; slang, if used, seems purposeful and is effective.</li> <li>• vocabulary that is striking and varied, but that is natural and not overdone.</li> <li>• ordinary words used in an unusual way.</li> <li>• words that evoke strong images; figurative language may be used.</li> </ul>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>Words convey the intended message in an interesting, precise, and natural way appropriate to audience and purpose. The writer employs a broad range of words which have been carefully chosen and thoughtfully placed for impact. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accurate, specific words; word choices energize the writing.</li> <li>• fresh, vivid expression; slang, if used, seems purposeful and is effective.</li> <li>• vocabulary that may be striking and varied, but that is natural and not overdone.</li> <li>• ordinary words used in an unusual way.</li> <li>• words that evoke clear images; figurative language may be used.</li> </ul>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>Words effectively convey the intended message. The writer employs a variety of words that are functional and appropriate to audience and purpose. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• words that work but do not particularly energize the writing.</li> <li>• expression that is functional; however, slang, if used, does not seem purposeful and is not particularly effective.</li> <li>• attempts at colorful language that may occasionally seem overdone.</li> <li>• occasional overuse of technical language or jargon.</li> <li>• rare experiments with language; however, the writing may have some fine moments and generally avoids clichés.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Language is quite ordinary, lacking interest, precision and variety, or may be inappropriate to audience and purpose in places. The writer does not employ a variety of words, producing a sort of “generic” paper filled with familiar words and phrases. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• words that work, but that rarely capture the reader’s interest.</li> <li>• expression that seems mundane and general; slang, if used, does not seem purposeful and is not effective.</li> <li>• attempts at colorful language that seem overdone or forced.</li> <li>• words that are accurate for the most part, although misused words may occasionally appear, technical language or jargon may be overused or inappropriately used.</li> <li>• reliance on clichés and overused expressions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Language is monotonous and/or misused, detracting from the meaning and impact. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• words that are colorless, flat or imprecise.</li> <li>• monotonous repetition or overwhelming reliance on worn expressions that repeatedly distract from the message.</li> <li>• images that are fuzzy or absent altogether.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>The writing shows an extremely limited vocabulary or is so filled with misuses of words that the meaning is obscured. Only the most general kind of message is communicated because of vague or imprecise language. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• general, vague words that fail to communicate.</li> <li>• an extremely limited range of words.</li> <li>• words that simply do not fit the text; they seem imprecise, inadequate, or just plain wrong.</li> </ul>

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## SENTENCE FLUENCY

<p><b>6</b></p> <p>The writing has an effective flow and rhythm. Sentences show a high degree of craftsmanship, with consistently strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a natural, fluent sound; it glides along with one sentence flowing effortlessly into the next.</li> <li>• extensive variation in sentence structure, length, and beginnings that add interest to the text.</li> <li>• sentence structure that enhances meaning by drawing attention to key ideas or reinforcing relationships among ideas.</li> <li>• varied sentence patterns that create an effective combination of power and grace.</li> <li>• strong control over sentence structure; fragments, if used at all, work well.</li> <li>• stylistic control; dialogue, if used, sounds natural.</li> </ul>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>The writing has an easy flow and rhythm. Sentences are carefully crafted, with strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a natural, fluent sound; it glides along with one sentence flowing into the next.</li> <li>• variation in sentence structure, length, and beginnings that add interest to the text.</li> <li>• sentence structure that enhances meaning.</li> <li>• control over sentence structure; fragments, if used at all, work well.</li> <li>• stylistic control; dialogue, if used sounds natural.</li> </ul>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>The writing flows; however, connections between phrases or sentences may be less than fluid. Sentence patterns are somewhat varied, contributing to ease in oral reading. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a natural sound; the reader can move easily through the piece, although it may lack a certain rhythm and grace.</li> <li>• some repeated patterns of sentence structure, length, and beginnings that may detract somewhat from overall impact.</li> <li>• strong control over simple sentence structures, but variable control over more complex sentences; fragments, if present, are usually effective.</li> <li>• occasional lapses in stylistic control; dialogue, if used, sounds natural for the most part, but may at times sound stilted or unnatural.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>The writing tends to be mechanical rather than fluid. Occasional awkward constructions may force the reader to slow down or reread. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some passages that invite fluid oral reading; however, others do not.</li> <li>• some variety in sentences structure, length, and beginnings, although the writer falls into repetitive sentence patterns.</li> <li>• good control over simple sentence structures, but little control over more complex sentences; fragments, if present, may not be effective.</li> <li>• sentences which, although functional, lack energy.</li> <li>• lapses in stylistic control; dialogue, if used, may sound stilted or unnatural.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>The writing tends to be either choppy or rambling. Awkward constructions often force the reader to slow down or reread. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• significant portions of the text that are difficult to follow or read aloud.</li> <li>• sentence patterns that are monotonous (e.g., subject-verb or subject-verb-object).</li> <li>• a significant number of awkward, choppy, or rambling constructions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>The writing is difficult to follow or to read aloud. Sentences tend to be incomplete, rambling, or very awkward. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• text that does not invite—and may not even permit—smooth oral reading.</li> <li>• confusing word order that is often jarring and irregular.</li> <li>• sentence structure that frequently obscures meaning.</li> <li>• sentences that are disjointed, confusing, or rambling.</li> </ul>

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## CONVENTIONS

<p><b>6</b></p> <p>The writing demonstrates exceptionally strong control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage) and uses them effectively to enhance communication. Errors are so few and so minor that the reader can easily skim right over them unless specifically searching for them. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong control of conventions; manipulation of conventions may occur for stylistic effect.</li> <li>• strong, effective use of punctuation that guides the reader through the text.</li> <li>• correct spelling, even of more difficult words.</li> <li>• paragraph breaks that reinforce the organizational structure.</li> <li>• correct grammar and usage that contribute to clarity and style.</li> <li>• skill in using a wide range of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece.</li> <li>• little or no need for editing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>The writing demonstrates strong control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage) and uses them effectively to enhance communication. Errors are so few and so minor that they do not impede readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong control of conventions.</li> <li>• effective use of punctuation that guides the reader through the text.</li> <li>• correct spelling, even of more difficult words.</li> <li>• paragraph breaks that reinforce the organizational structure.</li> <li>• correct capitalization; errors, if any, are minor.</li> <li>• correct grammar and usage that contribute to clarity and style.</li> <li>• skill in using a wide range of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece.</li> <li>• little need for editing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>The writing demonstrates control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage). Minor errors, while perhaps noticeable, do not impede readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• control over conventions used, although a wide range is not demonstrated.</li> <li>• correct end-of-sentence punctuation, internal punctuation may sometimes be incorrect.</li> <li>• spelling that is usually correct, especially on common words.</li> <li>• basically sound paragraph breaks that reinforce the organizational structure.</li> <li>• correct capitalization; errors, if any, are minor.</li> <li>• occasional lapses in correct grammar and usage; problems are not severe enough to distort meaning or confuse the reader.</li> <li>• moderate need for editing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>The writing demonstrates limited control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage). Errors begin to impede readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some control over basic conventions; the text may be too simple to reveal mastery.</li> <li>• end-of-sentence punctuation that is usually correct; however, internal punctuation contains frequent errors.</li> <li>• spelling errors that distract the reader; misspelling of common words occurs.</li> <li>• paragraphs that sometimes run together or begin at ineffective places.</li> <li>• capitalization errors.</li> <li>• errors in grammar and usage that do not block meaning but do distract the reader.</li> <li>• significant need for editing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>The writing demonstrates little control of standard writing conventions. Frequent, significant errors impede readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• little control over basic conventions.</li> <li>• many end-of-sentence punctuation errors; internal punctuation contains frequent errors.</li> <li>• spelling errors that frequently distract the reader; misspelling of common words often occurs.</li> <li>• paragraphs that often run together or begin in ineffective places.</li> <li>• capitalization that is inconsistent or often incorrect.</li> <li>• errors in grammar and usage that interfere with readability and meaning.</li> <li>• substantial need for editing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Numerous errors in usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. In fact, the severity and frequency of errors are so overwhelming that the reader finds it difficult to focus on the message and must reread for meaning. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• very limited skill in using conventions.</li> <li>• basic punctuation (including end-of-sentence punctuation) that tends to be omitted, haphazard, or incorrect.</li> <li>• frequent spelling errors that significantly impair readability.</li> <li>• paragraph breaks that may be highly irregular or so frequent (every sentence) that they bear no relation to the organization of the text.</li> <li>• capitalization that appears to be random.</li> <li>• a need for extensive editing.</li> </ul>

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